



STANDARDS AND ETHICS

QUARTER 4 REPORT 2013-2014

1. Introduction

This is the fourth quarterly report to the Audit & Governance Committee detailing both the figures for the Ethical Indicators and the figures for the Local Determination of Complaints process for 2013/14.

For clarification purposes the months covered by the quarters are as follows:

Quarter 1 – 1 April to 30 June
Quarter 2 – 1 July to 30 September
Quarter 3 – 1 October to 31 December
Quarter 4 – 1 January to 31 March

The report is split into 2 parts for ease of reference; Part 1 refers to the local determination of complaints, part 2 is the table showing the ethical indicators figures.

The report will enable the Audit & Governance Committee to build up a picture over time of how many complaints are received and where these are coming from. The parts of the Code of Conduct which have been breached will also be recorded to enable training to be targeted effectively.

2. Part 1 – Local Determination of Complaints

The Monitoring Officer received 0 complaints in Quarter 4 of 2013/14.

2.1 Source of Complaints

There were no complaints received.

2.2 Assessment Sub-Committee Decisions

There were no Assessment Sub-committee meetings in this quarter.

As members will be aware, the Monitoring Officer now pursues an informal dispute resolution process prior to initiating formal proceedings via the sub-committee route.

2.3 Timeliness of Decision

The Standards for England Guidance stated that the Assessment Sub-committee should complete its initial assessment of an allegation “within an average of 20 working days” to reach a decision on what should happen with the complaint. The Council has taken this standard and adapted it under the new rules to aim to hold an Assessment Sub-committee within 20 working days of notifying the parties that informal resolution is not possible.

2.4 Review Requests

There have been no review requests this year. Review requests can only be made following a decision of ‘No further Action’ by the Assessment Sub-committee where there is submission of new evidence or information by the complainant.

2.5 Subsequent Referrals

None to report – see above.

2.6 Outcome of Investigations

There were no investigations concluded in this period.

2.7 Parts of the Code Breached

This section is intended to show where there are patterns forming to enable the Audit & Governance Committee to determine where there needs to be further training for Councillors. Targeting training in this way makes it more sustainable and, hopefully, more effective.

So far this year, the following areas of the code were found to have been breached:

N/A

4. Part 2 – Ethical Indicators

Ref.	Performance Indicator Description	Officer Responsible for Providing Information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			Actual 2012/13	2013/14	Actual 2012/13	2013/14	Actual 2012/13	2013/14	Actual 2012/13	2013/14
SE1	Objections to the Councils Accounts	Financial Planning Team Manager	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SE3	Follow up action relating to breaches of the Member/Officer Protocol (Members)	Head of Legal and Support Services	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SE3a	Disciplinary action relating to breaches of the Member/Officer Protocol (staff)	Human Resources Team Manager	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SE4	District Audit Public Interest Reports	Senior Auditor	0	0	0		0	0	0	0
SE5	Number of Whistle blowing Incidents reported		1	0	0		0	0	0	0
SE6	No. of recommendations made to improve governance procedures / policies		0	4	4	5	2	0	3	17
SE6a	No. of recommendations implemented		7	5	6	2	1	1	1	9
SE7	No. of Ombudsman complaints received	Customer Services and Corporate Complaints Officer	1	2	2	2	2	2	2	0
SE7a	No. of Ombudsman complaints resolved		1	1 (1 where LGO has sent further enquiries)	2	2 (1 awaiting final decision)	2	1 (1 awaiting final decision)	2 (1 responded to in Q1 13/14)	0

Ref.	Performance Indicator Description	Officer Responsible for Providing Information	Q1		Q2		Q3		Q4	
			Actual 2012/13	2013/14	Actual 2012/13	2013/14	Actual 2012/13	2013/14	Actual 2012/13	2013/14
SE7b	No. of Ombudsman complaints where compensation paid	Customer Services and Corporate Complaints Officer	0	1	1	0	1	0 (based on 1 resolved in Q3)	0	0
SE8	No. of Corporate Complaints received		77	72	84	75	89	53	51	84
SE8a	No. of Corporate Complaints resolved		75	68	84	71	89	50	47	79
SE8b	No. of Corporate Complaints where compensation paid		1	3	2	2	6	2	0	3
Freedom of Information Act Indicators										
SE9	Total no. of requests received	Head of Legal and Support Services	115	116	84	109	83	165	148	208
SE9a	No. of requests compliant		94	100	59	92	72	125	128	151
SE9b	No. of Non compliant requests		21	14	14	15	11	31	16	51
SE9c	No of requests still open and within the 20 working days		0	0	8	0	0	0	2	0
SE9d	Number withheld due to exemptions/fees applied		12	5	3	4	9	5	16	6

